

How Hastings Hotels
**saved 48% in
promotional costs**
from direct bookings
during COVID-19

Case Study
with



Case Study

The Client

Founded over 50 years ago, Hastings Hotels has developed into Northern Ireland's premier luxury hotel group. Comprised of 7 hotels across the province, each of the collection's properties possess their very own charm and character, shaping captivating experiences for every guest. Home to luxurious accommodation, gourmet dining, and world-class spas, Hastings Hotels is proud to deliver the true meaning of elegance and Irish hospitality to travelers coming from all around the world.

Seeking to give their direct channel a digital transformation, the group started to work with The Hotels Network (THN) in 2018. Now in their third year of partnership, Hastings Hotels decided to take their website personalization to the next level by testing **Oraculo Convert**, one of THN's recent innovations that harnesses machine learning techniques.



Culloden Estate and Spa located in Belfast



Case Study



Culloden Estate and Spa fireplace

The Backdrop

Seasonality has always been the norm in the hospitality landscape and a major factor in strategic planning for hotels but the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted trends and erased any trace of predictability in demand.

Similar to countless hotel brands worldwide, during the outbreak Hastings Hotels faced the challenge of low occupancy, reduced website traffic, and a limited promotional budget. They wanted to find a solution to effectively increase their direct booking conversion rate while also keeping spend on discounts, promotions, and paid advertising in check.



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The Solution

Looking for ideas to help stimulate their recovery, the brand saw value in completing a 2-month trial period of THN's Predictive Personalization tool **Oraculo Convert** to **generate more direct bookings** while **optimizing ROI**.

With a focus on visitors with a low likelihood to convert, Hastings Hotels **aimed to reduce their promotional spend** despite facing one of the most challenging situations the hospitality industry has ever confronted.



Grand Central Hotel Seahorse Restaurant





“

The pandemic has certainly had a big impact on hospitality owners in Ireland and so it was important to think outside the box and test new initiatives such as Oraculo. The implementation was simple and fast, with the team at THN helping us to set up the campaign, while Oraculo took care of the rest. Looking at the numbers, it is clear that having Oraculo onboard helped to strengthen our direct booking results at a time when demand was particularly low.

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Julie Hastings - Marketing
Director, Hastings Hotels

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How Oraculo Works

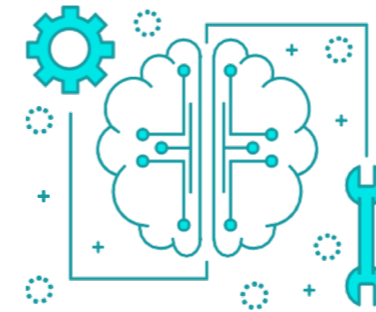
The concept of leveraging technology to optimize the user experience and increase hotel revenue simultaneously is what we call Predictive Personalization, the force behind Oraculo.

This unique product follows a **two-step process** comprised of a **predictive algorithm** and **website campaigns** managed by THN's experts. First, an algorithm using machine learning assigns a value score to each user in real time, based on their likelihood of completing a reservation. It then personalizes the user experience by automatically delivering the most suitable offers and content depending on this value score.

With Oraculo, hotels can easily adapt their commercial strategy on the fly, **creating value-targeted campaigns, increasing direct bookings** while **reducing promotional costs**.



1



2



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Slieve Donard Resort and Spa buffet

The Implementation

As Hastings Hotels were already THN clients, activating Oraculo was even more fast and simple than usual: it only involved setting the value score for low intent users. The number of visitors that fell into this score was not static, changing constantly based on traffic behavior.

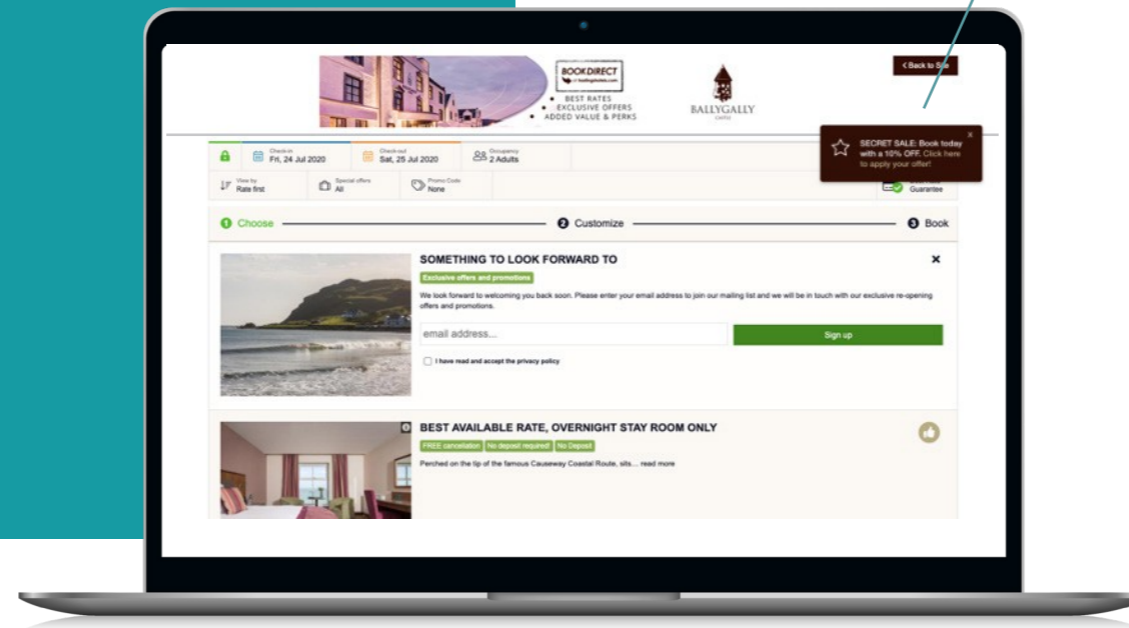
In terms of the actual campaign running on the hotel website, the Oraculo Campaign Manager took care of everything, from creating the messages to fit the identity of the brand to controlling campaign performance.

Case Study

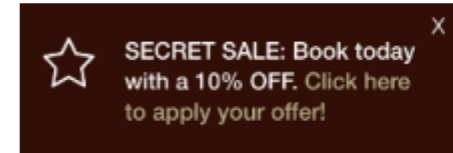
A/B Test: Offer to low-intent users

In order to measure the effectiveness of the value-targeted campaign, an A/B test was set up splitting the low-intent users into two groups. Group A were shown the exclusive offer but it was hidden for Group B. High-Intent users were automatically excluded from seeing the offer as they didn't match the value score criteria.

During the trial period, from April to June 2020, each user visiting the hotel website was given a score of 0 to 100 based on their likelihood to book. The following offer was created for low-intent users



Smart note on the booking engine



The Smart Note, displayed on the booking engine, showcased a 10% off secret sale to encourage low-intent users to book. It was only shown to those users with a 0 to 40% probability of completing a reservation and who were in Group A of the A/B test (low-intent users in Group B did not see the Smart Note).

By presenting the discount using a one-click promocode format, Hastings Hotels were able to ensure that the discount could only be applied to that booking and not be shared with other visitors.



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The Results

Running the low-intent campaign showed that, despite experiencing a significant traffic decrease, Hastings Hotels could still increase revenue while saving on promotional spend. With this hyper-targeted 10% off discount, they were able to get additional reservations from users who would otherwise have left the website without booking, without cannibalizing sales from users with a high probability of converting.

After running the campaign for 2 months, the offer generated:

48%

savings in promotional spend

The algorithm identified those visitors with a high probability to book. As these users didn't need an extra incentive to book, the discount was not offered, generating savings.

+£29k

revenue from low-intent users

This was the value of the bookings completed using the promo code.

120+

bookings influenced

This was the number of visitors who came back after seeing the offer and completed a booking without using the promo code.



About The Hotels Network

The Hotels Network is an innovative technology company working with over 20,000 hotels around the globe. Boasting an international team of specialists with deep expertise in hospitality, product design and consumer marketing, the company offers clients a full-stack growth platform to power their direct channel. By leveraging a series of integrated tools and analytics, hotel brands can attract, engage and convert guests throughout the user journey.

In addition to price comparison, reviews summary, and a suite of personalization options, THN's Direct AI Suite is deeply integrated in their platform, from predictive analytics to generative AI. Predictive Personalization uses machine learning to predict user behavior and automatically tailor messaging and offers for each user. BenchDirect's benchmarking tool provides unmatched competitive data for the direct channel. Recent innovations include KITT, an AI-powered receptionist, and Loyalty Lite, a seamless guest login tool for personalized booking experiences.

[Contact us](#) today to find out more.

THN is proud to have been recognized for the company's product innovations, rapid growth, and unique workplace culture for the third year in a row, most recently named the [Best Direct Booking Tool for 2025](#) in the prestigious HotelTechAwards.





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